RAJYA SABHA

Thursday, 3rd December, 2009/Agrahayana, 12, 1931 (Saka)

The House met at eleven of the clock,

[MR. CHAIRMAN in the Chair]

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

द्वितीय प्रशासनिक सुधार आयोग (ए.आर.सी.) की सिफारिशों का कार्यान्वयन

*201. **श्री रवि शंकर प्रसाद** :

श्री राज मोहिन्दर सिंह मजीठा :

क्या **प्रधानमंत्री** यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) क्या यह सच है कि सरकार ने द्वितीय प्रशासनिक सुधार आयोग की सिफारिशों को क्रियान्वित करते हुए देश के प्रशासन में सुधार लाने हेतु एक कार्य-योजना तैयार की है;

(ख) यदि हां, तो यह कार्य-योजना क्या है; और

(ग) इसे कब तक क्रियान्वित कर दिया जायेगा?

प्रधानमंत्री कार्यालय में राज्य मंत्री (श्री पृथ्वीराज चव्हाण): (क) से (ग) जी हां। सरकार दूसरे प्रशासनिक सुधार आयोग द्वारा इसकी 15 रिपोर्टों में की गई सिफारिशों के कार्यान्वयन हेतु विचार कर रही है। स्वीकार की गई कुछ सिफारिशें पहले से ही क्रियान्वित की जा रही है। एक निर्धारित समय-सीमा निर्धारित करना संभव नहीं होगा।

Implementation of recommendations of Second ARC

†*201. SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD:††

SHRI RAJ MOHINDER SINGH MAJITHA:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that an action plan has been prepared by Government to reform the administration of the country by implementing the recommendations of the Second Administrative Reforms Commission;

(b) if so, what is the action plan; and

(c) by when will it be implemented?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE (SHRI PRITHVIRAJ CHAVAN): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. Government is considering the recommendations made by the second Administrative Reforms Commission in its 15 Reports for implementation. Some of the accepted recommendations are already being implemented. It would not be feasible to prescribe a definite time frame.

SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD: Mr. Chairman, Sir, my good friend, Mr. Prithviraj Chavan, has been described with five designations in the reply. I quite appreciate his workload.

Hon. Minister, I would like to know from you as to why you are not able to share with the House the exact recommendations you have accepted. And, if those have been accepted, what is the difficulty in giving a time-frame to that?

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi

††The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shri Ravi Shankar Prasad.

SHRI PRITHVIRAJ CHAVAN: Mr. Chairman, Sir, the process that has been followed is quite an exhaustive one. The Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances is the nodal Department. It first examines the Report. There are Fifteen Reports it has so far been received. After it is processed by the administrative Ministry, since each Report deals with various Ministries of the Government of India, the respective Ministries are asked to process it for their initial comments. After that, there is a Group of Secretaries Chaired by the Cabinet Secretary. It is called the Core Group on Administrative Reforms. That goes through all the Reports. After that is processed by the Committee Chaired by the Cabinet Secretary, it goes to the Group of Ministers. Then, the Group of Ministers takes up each Report, one-by-one. So far, out of fifteen Reports, twelve Reports have been seen by the Cabinet Secretary's Committee and, out of those Twelve Reports which the Core Group has looked at, the GoM has seen six Reports and many recommendations have been accepted and many of them are being implemented. Those recommendations which do not need any legislative action have already been implemented. The Government has given information about those. The information is also given to the Cabinet regularly on every Report. After that, it will be made public. So, there is nothing secret about it, except there are certain actions which require the legislative measures to be taken and that will take time. So, the exact time is not possible to give. But, at the same time, the Government intends to implement the recommendations of the Second Administrative Reforms Commission. It has done an excellent job over four years. We will take all the good suggestions and implement as much as practical.

SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD: Sir, my second supplementary has some importance and I will be grateful if the hon. Prime Minister is kind enough to respond to it.

Sir, whenever we talk of administrative reforms, we talk of reforms in the Civil Services which are a part of it to ensure a faster delivery system. In this connection, I would like to refer to recommendation no, 2.8 of the Memorandum of Action Taken on the Report of the Liberahan Commission which forms a part of this House. It says, "The Civil Servants who are posted at the helm of affairs ought, to be picked for the skills that they are required to exercise, rather than for completely unrelated academic skills or for castiest or regional basis." Sir, my question is: Under the Constitution, reservation for SC/ST is permissible and recognised and, in the same way, reservation for backward classes is permissible. But, you say, in your recommendation, 'the matter is referred to the UPSC for consideration,' My question is: Do you intend to dilute or do away with reservation for backward castes or SC/ST in the light of your acceptance of this recommendation of the Liberahan Commission Report?

SHRI PRITHVIRAJ CHAVAN: Sir, first of all, we are discussing the Reports of the Second Administrative Reforms Commission. The Liberahan Commission's Report is going to be discussed in this House. There is going to be a full-fledged discussion and the hon. Member is definitely welcome to raise those issues when it is discussed.

The hon. Member has asked about the reservation issue. I cannot reply to that. I request the hon. Member to give a separate notice on that.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shri Majitha. Not present ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD: Sir, my supplementary is a part of the main question. Sir, I seek your protection. I asked about the Civil Services. The question is relating to the Constitution. Administrative Reforms include Civil Services reforms. In that connection, the Government has accepted the Report and I am putting a question on that. It is completely within the purview of the main Question. I need your protection with great respect, Sir. Is the Government doing away with reservation for SC/ST and backward classes? That is the question.

SHRI PRITHVIRAJ CHAVAN: Sir, there is no question of doing away with reservation. It is a Constitutional provision.

SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD: Then, why have you said that it has been sent to the UPSC? You are saying that the matter has been referred to the UPSC ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. CHAIRMAN: We are not discussing that Report here.

SHRI PRITHVIRAJ CHAVAN: Sir, all these recommendations have to be looked into by somebody. We may not accept them.

SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD: Common, before your acceptance, you have reacted in such a way! You have not rejected. ...*(Interruptions)*... That is what I am saying.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Majitha. Not present.

SHRI SHANTARAM LAXMAN NAIK: Sir, basically, administrative reforms involve technical things, legal and procedural matters. But work lethargy is also another aspect of administrative reforms which is going on in our offices, namely, our officers, clerks having all the time cups of tea, chewing paans, giving a cursory look at the files, shifting from one table to another table. Sir, we ourselves get reply to our questions after two months. I would suggest, Sir, that let a sample of 1,000 replies given by various Departments to us, the Members of Parliament, be taken and, Sir, you will find, that 99 per cent of those replies are in negative. Let a third party, a Committee, examine those replies to see whether the work asked by the Members of Parliament could have been done in those, particular, 1000 cases or not.

SHRI PRITHVIRAJ CHAVAN: Sir, the whole purpose of setting up the second Administrative Reforms Commission is that the Government wants a very pro-active and accountable administration. The ARC has done excellent work. They have submitted 15 Reports. The intent of the Government is to tone up the administration. But I would not accept a very sweeping remark, which you made earlier, that the entire civil service is not working. There are some people who may not be

very effective. We are re-training them, we are re-posting them. We have got the Right to Information Act which is eliciting information from the officers who are not very prompt and not taking pro-active steps. Sir, it is the intention of the Government to tone up the administration, whether it is the Right to Information Act, whether it is the Administrative Reforms Commission. These are the steps to tone up the administration.

DR. K. MALAISAMY: Sir, assuming for the sake of argument that all the recommendations of the Administrative Reforms Commission have been implemented, in such a situation, can you give an assurance that under that system, interference in some form or the other, or the influence in some form or the other, will be avoided in administration, whether political or social, in whatever form?

SHRI PRITHVIRAJ CHAVAN: Sir, this is completely a hypothetical question. I think it is not the intention of the Executive to interfere. Sir, we want to have a good and clean administration, responsive and accountable administration and our intention will be to provide that.

PROF. P.J. KURIEN: Sir, I believe in the ARC Report, there are some recommendations for eliminating corruption in the administrative system. My simple question is: Will the Government look, especially, into those recomendations and implement them instead of waiting for all the Report to be implemented?

SHRI PRITHVIRAJ CHAVAN: Sir, as I said, whatever recommendations that get accepted by the Government will be implemented and we are implementing them, without waiting for anything, except those recommendations which entail legislative action by the Government, which will take time. Bills have to be drafted and consultation process has to be done. You asked about corruption. It is the stated policy of the Government that there will be Zero Tolerance to corruption and the steps we have taken in that direction are: One very important step is the Right to Information Act which solicits information and it has given us very open and transparent Government. The other thing is that we are implementing e-governance. We will make sure that a lot of paper work is reduced. People get information in time. Decisions come in time. One of the major reasons for corruption is that the people get a chance to delay decisions by keeping files with them. Now, in e-Governance mode, you can track every file on the computer sitting anywhere and you could know where exactly which file is lying. This is already having a very positive effect on the governance. Of course, this is an ongoing activity. It is not that one fine morning it will be done. Our endeavour is to bring all the important technologies, IT tools and open governance, so that we get a corruption-free Government.

*202. *[The questioner(s) Shri Shivanand Tiwari and Shri Raj Mohinder Singh Majitha were absent. For Answer *vide* page 24 infra]